

Outreach Notes



November 2004

Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)
Office of Outreach and Exporter Assistance (OOEA)

Vol. 1



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Email export questions to FAS Trade Assistance and Promotion Office at:
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Release No. 0465.04
720-4623

USDA Press Office (202)

U.S. – Japanese Officials Conclude Agreement for Resumption of Beef Trade

Tokyo, Japan. October 23. U.S. and Japanese officials in Tokyo today reached a framework agreement that will permit the resumption of beef trade between the two countries following a ten-month interruption. The agreement was reached after three days of prolonged negotiations to determine the conditions under which the trade will be resumed. The officials issued a joint statement that highlights the various provisions of the agreement.

Trade between the two countries will resume following completion of regulatory processes in both countries. Japan now is revising domestic regulations to alter its BSE cattle testing requirements and other procedures. The United States will initiate rulemaking procedures relating to importation of Japanese specialty beef.

A special marketing program will be developed for Japan under which USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service will certify that exported products meet the terms of the agreement. The United States now will be permitted to sell beef and variety meats to Japanese importers from animals below 21 months of age. Animal age will be determined by a combination of production records and physiological means (grading system). This marketing program will be evaluated by the countries in July 2005 and modified as appropriate. This evaluation will be based in part on an independent review of the marketing program and the BSE situation conducted by experts from the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and other organizations.

Japan was the largest market for U.S. beef and products with sales in 2003 before the ban was imposed exceeding \$1.7 billion. Exports in total account for well over 10% of the total value of U.S. beef output. U.S. sales to Japan were suspended following the discovery of the one case of BSE from an imported cow on December 23, 2003 in Washington State.

The U.S. trade delegation, led by Dr. J. B. Penn, Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services, included other officials from USDA, the Department of State, Food and Drug Administration, and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative. The Japanese interagency delegation was led by Mr. Kenichiro Sasae, Director-General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The joint press statement issued by the officials in Tokyo can be found on the USDA web site at <http://www.usda.gov>.



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Release No. 0468.04

Julie Quick (202) 720-4623

USDA ANNOUNCES TAIWAN TO RESUME U.S. BEEF TRADE

TAIPEI, TAIWAN, Oct. 26, 2004—Taiwan has agreed in principle to resume imports of U.S. beef and beef products, U.S. officials announced today. In 2003, Taiwan's purchases of beef and ruminant products amounted to some \$325 million.

"We are very pleased with this progress in yet another important beef market," Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman said. "We are continuing our market opening efforts in the remaining key countries. Our goal is a return to normal beef trade as quickly as possible."

Taiwan officials indicated that the required assessments and evaluations for trade to resume were nearing completion. The final step is on-site inspection of the major features and implementation of the U.S. BSE measures.

A delegation of Taiwan experts will now travel to the United States for these site visits beginning Nov. 10.

Dr. J. B. Penn, under secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services, led a delegation that met with Taiwanese Health and Agriculture officials early this week. The delegation had also earlier held discussions in Japan and will visit other U.S. customer countries in the Asian region.

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Release No. 0481.04

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USDA TO AWARD AN ADDITIONAL \$1.5 MILLION TO STATES FOR A NATIONAL ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

WASHINGTON, Oct. 28, 2004—Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman today announced that an additional \$1.5 million is available for national animal identification system (NAIS) cooperative agreements with states.

“These funds have been set aside to support premises registration activities,” said Veneman. “A national animal identification system will help locate premises where animals are born, managed, marketed or exhibited. States that applied for funding in July and were not selected at that time are now eligible for a portion of the \$1.5 million if they meet specified requirements.”

Earlier this year, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) received a transfer of \$18.8 million from USDA’s Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) to begin implementing the NAIS. Of this amount, APHIS originally set aside \$11.64 million for cooperative agreements with state and tribal governments. USDA has now set aside \$1.5 million more to fund additional cooperative agreements. The remainder of the funds is being used in support of other aspects of the national system, including building database architecture and carrying out outreach activities.

In August, APHIS selected 29 projects from more than 40 applications for cooperative agreement funding. The focus of these cooperative agreements is chiefly on premises identification and registration. Some states and tribes will be evaluating animal identification technologies to determine how the collection of records can be automated.

Each of the states that had applied this past summer but were not selected have been notified that they are now eligible for a minimum of \$100,000 to carry out premises registration activities. Depending on the number of livestock operations in the state, that amount could be increased by up to \$30,000. The revised applications are due by Dec. 1 and must address any feedback received during the evaluation of their first-round application.

The NAIS continues to be a USDA priority. The President’s fiscal year 2005 budget requests \$33 million to continue supporting its implementation and a portion of these funds would be used for additional cooperative agreements with states and tribes.

They will continue to register premises and also phase in animal identification systems at a state or regional level.

State	Amount Available*
Alabama Department of Agriculture	\$115,000
Arkansas Livestock and Poultry Commission	\$115,000
Delaware and Maryland Departments of Agriculture	\$105,000
Georgia Department of Agriculture	\$120,000
Iowa Department of Agriculture	\$130,000
Michigan Department of Agriculture	\$120,000
Nevada State Department of Agriculture	\$100,000
North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services	\$120,000
New York Animal Premises and Animal Identification Project	\$115,000
Tennessee Department of Agriculture	\$130,000
Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services	\$115,000
Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Trade and Commission Protection	\$100,000
Washington State Department of Agriculture	\$115,000
GRAND TOTAL	\$1,500,000

* Funding for all projects listed has been reserved. The actual award of funds will be contingent upon the cooperators submitting revised applications by Dec. 1 and meeting specified requirements, including providing outcome-based performance measures and a detailed budget.

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Note to Reporters: USDA news releases, program announcements and media advisories are available on the Internet. Go to the APHIS home page at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov> and click on the "News" button. Also, anyone with an e-mail address can sign up to receive APHIS press releases automatically. Send an e-mail message to lyris@mdrdlyriss10.aphis.usda.gov and leave the subject blank. In the message, type "subscribe press_releases."

Quarantines Released in Texas

News Release

Texas Animal Health Commission

Box 12966 * Austin, Texas 78711 * (800) 550-8242 * FAX (512) 719-0719

Bob Hillman, DVM, Executive Director

For info, contact Carla Everett, information officer, at 1-800-550-8242, ext. 710,
or ceverett@tahc.state.tx.us

For immediate release:

All Vesicular Stomatitis (VS) Quarantines Released in Texas

For the first time since May 19, Texas has no animals or herds restricted because of Vesicular Stomatitis (VS), a blistering disease that can temporarily debilitate affected equine animals, cattle, goats, deer, swine or other susceptible species. VS occurs every few years in the Southwest, and the virus is thought to be transmitted by sand flies and black flies. Animals affected by the disease usually begin to heal several weeks after exhibiting blisters, sloughing of skin or sores in and around the mouth, above the hooves, or on the muzzle or teats.

“Texas was the first of three states to have VS infection this year. Throughout the summer, laboratory tests confirmed infection in horses and cattle on 15 Texas premises in eight counties. On October 18, the final Texas quarantine was released. This premise, in Kerr County, had been quarantined in early September, when VS infection was confirmed in a horse. We currently have no VS cases or quarantines, and no active VS investigations,” explained Dr. Bob Hillman, Texas’ state veterinarian and head of the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC), the state’s livestock and poultry health regulatory agency. Texas counties with confirmed VS cases this summer were Reeves, Val Verde, Uvalde, Starr, Yoakum, Kerr, Bandera and Dimmit. Animal health officials lift premise quarantines 30 days after the animals heal from the VS lesions.

Dr. Hillman said that releasing the last VS quarantine in the state will make it easier to ship Texas livestock to other states. He recommended, however, that producers and private veterinary practitioners continue to check with states of destination prior to transporting animals, to ensure all entry requirements are met.

As of mid-October, 107 premises in 22 Colorado counties, and 39 premises in eight New Mexico counties remain quarantined, due to VS infection. VS-infected animals in these states include horses, cattle, an alpaca, a llama, and several sheep and goats.

“VS rarely causes death in affected animals, but it is painful to animals, due to blisters and sloughing of skin. When VS strikes cattle or other cloven-hooved animals, laboratory tests are essential, because VS lesions mimic those of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), a highly dangerous foreign animal disease. Even though horses are not susceptible to FMD, we still recommend testing, to determine whether the lesions were caused by VS, a toxic plant or poison,” said Dr. Bob Hillman.

“As always, we urge producers to call their private veterinary practitioner and their state animal health officials if livestock or poultry exhibit unusual signs of disease,” said Dr. Hillman. These signs may include blistering or sores around the animal’s mouth, hooves or teats; widespread illness or unexpected death loss in a herd or flock; unusual ticks or maggots; or animals that stagger or are unable to rise or walk.

To make a report, owners and private veterinary practitioners should call:

Texas Animal Health Commission -- 1-800-550-8242

New Mexico Livestock Board -- 1-505-841-6161

Colorado Department of Agriculture, State Veterinarians Office 1-303-239-4161



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Release No. 0476.04

Julie Quick (202) 720-4623

Terry Meisenbach (202) 720-2677

USDA AWARDS GRANTS TO ASSIST SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS AND RANCHERS

CASA GRANDE, Ariz, Oct. 29, 2004--Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman today announced that USDA is awarding 22 competitive grants totaling more than \$5.9 million to strengthen efforts aimed at serving minority and disadvantaged farmers.

"We are committed to helping the nation's minority and socially disadvantaged farmers," said Veneman. "The grants will help many farmers and ranchers to successfully acquire, own, operate and retain farms and ranches by delivering a wide range of outreach and assistance activities including farm management, financial management and marketing."

The grants announced today are part of the Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (OASDFR) Program, also referred to as the 2501, and are administered by USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES). A socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice without regard to their individual qualities.

Veneman said that USDA is working to improve services to minority and socially disadvantaged farmers including creating USDA's Office of Minority and Socially Disadvantaged Farmers Assistance (MSDA), established almost two years ago to work with minority and socially disadvantaged farmers who have concerns and questions about loan applications. The office, operated by the Farm Service Agency, is open from Monday to Friday, 8 to 5 p.m. Eastern Time, and can be reached by calling 1-866-538-2610 (toll free) or 202-720-1584 (local). In addition, Vernon Parker, assistant secretary for Civil Rights, is increasing communications with various groups about improving access to USDA programs and insuring compliance with civil rights laws and regulations.

Of the 22 organizations that will receive an award, eight are 1890 land grant colleges and universities, one is a 1994 land grant college, nine are not-for-profit, one is a Hispanic Serving Institution, and three are from other universities that serve socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

Those receiving grants include:

Developing Innovations in Navajo Education, Inc., Flagstaff, Ariz., \$292,886, for promoting the distribution and adoption of effective traditional Navajo agricultural practices throughout the southwest region of the Navajo Nation. This project will also increase Navajo farmer access to vital USDA support services.

The Southside Community Land Trust, Providence, R.I., \$62,918, to teach basic computer skills, risk management and learning to grow and market ethnic and tropical varieties of vegetables to new entry immigrant and minority farmers.

Kentucky State University, Frankfort, Ky., \$300,000, to enhance the knowledge of socially disadvantaged farmers, specifically Native American and African American farmers in beef cattle and dairy beef operations and marketing systems. This endeavor will improve their farms' profitability by applying risk management strategies, farm management, and recordkeeping systems.

Virginia State University, Petersburg, Va., \$208,231, to assist socially disadvantaged farmers, particularly African American farmers in developing and enhancing farm business management skills and computer technology; beginning farmers will also be assisted in identifying and adopting environmentally sound alternative enterprises through inexpensive and efficient production practices.

Kansas Black Farmers Association, Omaha, Neb., \$197,500, to assist Black farmers in Kansas and Nebraska in addressing issues related to improving and expanding farming opportunities including raising grain crops and developing markets.

Langston University, Oklahoma City, Okla., \$300,000, to equip socially disadvantaged farmers, particularly Native American and African American farmers, to own and operate farms and ranches; and to develop business and entrepreneurial skills.

University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff, Ark., \$299,772, to assist African American and Hispanic socially disadvantaged farmers in learning the skills necessary in owning and maintaining farm lands. These farmers will also receive training in completing loan and grant applications, improving production practices, farm management, and utilizing alternative enterprises to increase farm profits.

Tuskegee University, Tuskegee, Ala., \$300,000, to work with minority farmers, specifically Native American and Hispanic/Latino farm families to develop, and implement programs so that eligible farmers and their family members may apply for and acquire farms, equipment and housing.

University of Hawaii, Hoolehua, Hawaii, \$300,000, this project will enable the Molokai native Hawaiians to establish farms as a strategy to demonstrate and transfer appropriate technology to native Hawaiian farm families on the Island of Molokai.

Si Tanka (Big Foot) College, Eagle Butte, S.D., \$299,748, for hands-on training to strengthen the skills of Native American farmers in value-added processing and marketing of cooperatives.

Coastal Enterprises, Inc, Portland, Maine, \$300,000, to work with Latino farm workers and Somali farmers and assist them in building successful farm enterprises that are consistent with their culture and lifestyle.

University of Hawaii, Hilo, Hawaii, \$300,000, to improve the technical and managerial skills of small scale farmers in the Federated States of Micronesia, the republic of the Marshall islands, Hawaii and Alaska so as to enhance production, business management and marketing skills through strengthening of regional extension network.

Texas/Mexico Border Coalition, \$297,870, to provide training and technical assistance to Hispanic producers for computer usage through the USDA e-Government initiatives and also in gaining access to USDA programs and services.

Prairie View A&M University, Prairie View, Texas, \$200,000 for work with African American and Hispanic farmers by teaching strategies for effective marketing practices, better farm management, and business decision making through computer applications.

Alcorn State University, Alcorn State, Miss., \$300,000, for outreach in identifying socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers who can participate in USDA programs. A promotional program will be implemented statewide through media, and publications to enhance small farmers' awareness of USDA programs and offer them technical assistance.

Minnesota Food Association, St. Anthony, Minn., \$299,000, for work with new immigrants from South East Asia, Hispanic and Latin countries and Africa on programs and services available through the USDA and assist these farmers in developing new market outlets.

Alabama A&M University, Normal, Ala., \$300,000, to work one-on-one with agricultural producers, more specifically African American and Hispanic socially disadvantaged farmers to increase their awareness and understanding of alternative farm management concepts, tools and strategies.

Inter-Tribal Agriculture Council, Billings, Mont., \$300,000, to develop an outreach educational program which will include establishing and maintaining an internet site which will serve American Indian tribes, Indian agricultural producers, Indian landowners, and Tribal Land Grant Institutions.

University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii, \$25,000 to identify the Filipino immigrant farmers who are willing to participate in outreach and assistance programs, and assess the needs of immigrant farmers in pesticide use and marketing.

Federation of Southern Cooperatives, Albany, Ga., \$269,190 to strengthen the capacity of minority farmers, particularly African American farmers to gain access into federal farm assistance programs, value-added enterprises, and cooperative marketing, enabling them to increase both gross sales and net earnings and position themselves for future success.

Mississippi Association of Cooperatives, Jackson, Miss., \$299,787, for work with African American farmers in improving the management of small farm cooperatives and income of their members through farm and credit management training, marketing, and value-added processing.

New Mexico State University, Alcalde, N.M., \$219,283, for outreach and technical assistance to Native American and Hispanic farmers and ranchers so they can enhance their capacity to improve upon their farm management and marketing skills.

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Release No. 0454.04

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USDA REESTABLISHES GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE NATIONAL POULTRY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

WASHINGTON, Oct. 20, 2004 – Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman today announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture is reestablishing the general conference committee of the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP). This committee is authorized for a two-year period.

“This committee will provide critical advice regarding poultry health issues,” said Veneman.

The General Conference Committee is the official advisory committee to the secretary of agriculture regarding poultry health issues. The committee serves as a forum for the study of problems relating to poultry health and as the need arises, makes specific recommendations to the secretary of agriculture concerning how USDA can help the industry solve these problems. The committee also assists USDA with planning, organizing and conducting the biennial conference of NPIP; evaluates comments received from interested persons concerning proposed amendments to USDA regulations that pertain to poultry health; and serves as a liaison between NPIP and the U.S. Animal Health Association. The authority for re-establishment of the committee's charter is the Federal Advisory Committees Act.

NPIP is a cooperative federal-state-industry mechanism for controlling certain poultry diseases such as pullorum, fowl typhoid and avian influenza. NPIP also consists of a variety of programs intended to prevent and control egg-transmitted, hatchery-disseminated poultry diseases.

Notice of this action was published in the Oct. 15 *Federal Register*. APHIS documents published in the *Federal Register* and related information, including the names of organizations and individuals who have commented on APHIS dockets, are available on the Internet at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html>.

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For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
September 20, 2004

Memorandum for the Secretary of State, The Secretary of Agriculture, The Secretary of Commerce

Presidential Determination No. 2004-49

SUBJECT: Determination and Waiver of Application of Section 908(a)(1) of the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 with Respect to Libya

By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, including section 908(a)(3) of the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000, title IX, Public Law 106-387 (TSRA), I hereby determine that waiver of the application of section 908(a)(1) of TSRA with respect to Libya is in the national security interest of the United States and hereby waive the application of that section with respect to Libya.

The Secretary of State is hereby authorized and directed to report this determination and waiver to the Congress and to arrange for its publication in the Federal Register.

GEORGE W. BUSH

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U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE

Fact Sheet
Office of the Spokesman
Washington, DC
September 20, 2004

Terminating the National Emergency with Respect to Libya: Revocation of Executive Order Sanctions

Over the last nine months, Libya has worked closely with international organizations including the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, and has invited the assistance of the United States and United Kingdom, to transparently and verifiably eliminate its WMD and MTCR-class missile programs. It has:

- Facilitated the removal of all critical elements of its previously undeclared nuclear program;
- Signed and implemented the IAEA Additional Protocol;
- Acceded to the Chemical Weapons Convention;
- Acknowledged Rabta's historical use as a chemical weapons production facility and begun a process at the OPCW for approval to convert it to a pharmaceutical plant;

- Destroyed its munitions designed for use with toxic chemicals and secured chemical agents for destruction under international supervision;
- Submitted a declaration of its chemical agents to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons;
- Eliminated its Scud-C missile force and agreed to eliminate its Scud-B missiles;
- Turned over nuclear weapons documentation;
- Began working with the international community to remove highly enriched uranium and has agreed convert its reactor at Tajura to operate on Low-Enriched Uranium fuel;
- Allowed unimpeded site access by international personnel;
- Engaged in comprehensive discussions over the scope and intent of its WMD and missile programs;
- Pledged to halt all military trade with countries of proliferation concern; and
- Increased the international community's understanding of the global black market in the world's most dangerous technologies.

As a result of this effort, concerns over weapons of mass destruction no longer pose a barrier to the normalization of U.S.-Libyan relations. In responding to Libya's announcement on December 19, 2003 that it would voluntarily give up its WMD and MTCR-class missile programs, the President committed to respond to concrete Libyan actions in good faith, noting that Libya "can regain a secure and respected place among the nations and, over time, better relations with the United States."

The Executive Order signed today by the President:

- Terminates the National Emergency declared in 1986 under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act;
- Removes remaining economic restrictions on aviation services with Libya, permitting direct scheduled air service and regular passenger charter flights, subject to standard safety and any other regulatory requirements; and
- Unblocks approximately \$1.3 billion in assets frozen under the Libya sanctions program, belonging to both Libyan and non-Libyan entities.

In accordance with a general policy of providing a level playing field for U.S. business in Libya, the President has:

- waived a statutory prohibition in order to enable certain programs of the Departments of Agriculture and Commerce, including export credit guarantee programs.
- determined to waive the prohibition on the ability of U.S. taxpayers to claim foreign tax credits for taxes paid to Libya.

In the future, this general policy will be furthered through the use of U.S. Government programs such as those administered by the Export –Import Bank of the United States, the Overseas Private Insurance Corporation, and the Trade Development Agency. Where necessary, the Administration intends to use statutory waiver authorities – and in some cases seek legislative relief – to overcome statutory restrictions that would otherwise stand in the way of these programs.

Today's actions protect the interests of American victims of Libyan terrorism. We expect the families of the victims of Pan Am 103 to receive over \$1 billion in additional compensation under their settlement: money which otherwise would have reverted to Libya. With respect to other cases involving claims of U.S. citizens, Libya has reaffirmed to us that it has a policy of carrying out agreed-upon settlements and responding in good faith to legal cases, and we will hold it to that assurance. The Libyan government also recognizes that assets it owns and is introducing into the

U.S. as part of economic normalization could be at risk if it doesn't implement any resulting court judgments.

Libya remains designated a State Sponsor of terrorism. The termination of the national emergency will not effect a wide variety of other sanctions imposed on Libya due to its designation as a State Sponsor of terrorism under 620A of the Foreign Assistance Act (restrictions on foreign assistance), section 40 of the Arms Export Control Act (restrictions on arms exports), and section 6(j) of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (restrictions on exports of certain items on the Commodity Control List), as well as other statutory restrictions applicable to Libya.

2004/1001

[End]

Released on September 20, 2004



News Release



Release No. 0407.04

Steven Cohen, FSIS (202) 720-9113
Bradford Stone, FDA (301) 827-6250
Kirk Whitworth, DHS (202) 282-8010

USDA, FDA AND DHS SIGN AGREEMENT WITH NASDA TO MAKE NATION'S AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SUPPLY MORE SECURE

WASHINGTON, Sept. 23, 2004—The U.S. Department of Agriculture, in partnership with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), today signed a cooperative agreement with the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) to further develop integrated federal-state response plans, in support of the National Response Plan, for food and agricultural emergencies. This agreement advances one of the many homeland security directives set by Presidential Bush to improve federal, state and local cooperation through enhanced response and recovery procedures in the event of a disaster.

"Strengthening the food security infrastructure remains a high priority for the Bush Administration," said Agriculture Under Secretary for Food Safety Dr. Elsa Murano. "An integrated federal-state response plan will supplement the nation's strong food safety threat response system with additional measures to improve the ability of federal, state and local officials to prevent deliberate food contamination."

USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), FDA and DHS's Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection are funding the development of an integrated approach to prepare for and respond to emergencies affecting national agriculture and food infrastructure.

"This agreement greatly strengthens the essential food safety network of federal, state and municipal governments," said Acting Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Dr. Lester Crawford. "Establishment of clear and consistent practices for combating threats to the food supply is a necessary prerequisite to the public health imperative of providing secure, safe and nutritious food for all Americans."

The state departments of agriculture will gain technical expertise from FSIS, FDA and DHS officials through workgroups and tabletop exercises. Best practices and guidelines for federal and state food regulatory officials will be developed to address lessons learned from case studies and threat assessments.

"Securing our nation's food supply requires a unified effort from the federal to the farm level," said Frank Libutti, Under Secretary for Information Analysis and

Infrastructure Protection at the Department of Homeland Security. "This agreement is our next step in making sure that everyone is working together to keep our nation safe."

The cooperative agreement will occur in three phases with the first phase starting immediately and phase three concluding by June 2005. During the first phase, a

workgroup, comprised of federal, state and local officials, will gather information about existing state emergency response systems and how food/agricultural safety and security emergencies will be handled within the various states. The workgroup, during the second phase, will then develop an interagency response plan, which includes state and local participation, conduct tabletop exercises and pilots to test functionality of the emergency response plan and refine it based on lessons-learned and other input. Phase three will involve the development of guidelines for federal food and agricultural regulatory agencies to cooperate with state and local emergency response efforts, thus facilitating federal assistance to be made available more quickly and appropriately to assist the local response and recovery efforts.

Coordination and cooperation among stakeholders in food safety and security continues to be a principal commitment of the Administration as it continually strives to make greater advances in protecting the nation's food supply from intentional and unintentional threats. Additional information about food security is available on the FSIS Web page at

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Food_Security_&_Emergency_Preparedness/index.asp and FDA's Web page at <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/fsterr.html>.

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United States and Bahrain Sign Free Trade Agreement

September 14, 2004

The United States and Bahrain recently signed the U.S.-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement that according to the U.S. Trade Representative's Office will expand opportunities for U.S. exports including U.S. agricultural products of meats, fruits, vegetables, cereals and dairy products.

For the full story, click on the following websites below.

http://www.ustr.gov/Document_Library/Press_Releases/2004/September/United_States_Bahrain_Sign_Free_Trade_Agreement.html

or http://www.fas.usda.gov/itp/Policy/trade_news.htm



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Release No. 0428.04

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USDA RELEASES VOLUNTARY SECURITY GUIDANCE FOR AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD TRANSPORTERS

Government-Industry Partnership Provides Owners and Operators With Security Guidance

LAS VEGAS, Nev., Oct. 5, 2004—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today released a new voluntary security guidance document for truck transporters of agricultural and food products to bolster national security and safeguard public health.

“These guidelines are practical, flexible and proactive,” said Agriculture Deputy Secretary Jim Moseley during the American Trucking Associations (ATA) Agricultural and Food Transporters’ Conference (AFTC) being held here. “USDA developed this document in partnership with ATA/AFTC and it serves as a great example of how successful we can be when government and the private sector work together on homeland security. This partnership will serve as a model for future efforts.”

The *Guide for Security Practices in Transporting Agricultural and Food Commodities* is designed to enhance security measures practiced by the nation’s approximately 27,000 commercial transporters of agricultural and food-related products across the nation each year. Trucking is the common denominator that moves a rich diversity of materials – food as well as fertilizers, livestock as well as fresh and frozen produce, building materials as well as farming equipment – and provides a vital link in the farm to table continuum.

As part of the partnership, the ATA/AFTC undertook a major survey of 24,000 commercial food and agriculture transporters on their concerns regarding security, terrorism, and where and how to get information. The survey results helped in the development of the guide and informed the identification of additional security options aimed at enhancing protections already in practice across the industry to safeguard people, property, products, processes, information, and information systems.

The release of the guide is especially timely, as fall traditionally brings increased transportation service demands with the agricultural harvest season and the start of preparations and deliveries for the winter and holiday retail season.

This guide follows the same approach as other guidance offered by USDA for food producers, processors and providers. All are consistent with and in support of *Homeland Security Presidential Directive-9, Defense of United States Agriculture and Food* and are available at <http://www.usda.gov/homelandsecurity/homeland.html>. The ATA/AFTC website offers information for acquiring the guide in print or on CD-Rom at <http://www.truckline.com/cc/conferences/atc>.



Trade Adjustment Assistance for Farmers

Welcome to the Foreign Agricultural Service's Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) for Farmers homepage.

If you are a producer of a commodity, which has recently suffered from low prices due to increasing imports, you may be eligible for technical assistance and a financial payment under this program. First check our [petition registry](#); you could already be eligible for benefits. If not, you must form a group (minimum of 3 producers) to file a petition requesting eligibility for yourself, as well as for your neighbors who produce the same commodity in your state or region. If your petition is certified, you may apply immediately to the Farm Service Agency for trade adjustment assistance benefits.

Useful information regarding eligibility, filing petitions, applying for benefits, a list of frequently asked questions ([FAQs](#)), and a TAA fact sheet can be found on our site. For information and advice on filing petitions, you may contact the Trade Adjustment Assistance Office by phone at (202) 720-2916 or by [email](#).

If you are already eligible for TAA, please contact your [Farm Service Agency](#) Administrative County Office.

You can use our online resources [library](#) for [forms](#) and TAA rules.

Information regarding office mailing address, hours of operation, and telephone numbers can be found at this [link](#).

We look forward in assisting you with the preparation of your TAA petition or with other matters relating to Trade Adjustment Assistance for Farmers.

- [Petition registry](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [Forms and Resources](#)
- [Contact Information](#)



DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

Welcome to the 1st Edition of “OUTREACH NOTES” a monthly electronic news report from the Foreign Agricultural Service’s Office of Outreach and Exporter Assistance (OOEA). We created “OUTREACH NOTES” because we feel it’s important that you get timely information about agricultural trade opportunities, issues and exporter assistance.

The OOEA directs the FAS Outreach Program that seeks to energize U.S. agricultural interests to export; educate the public on the importance of trade; and build grassroots support for policy, food security, and foreign market development initiatives. To support this campaign the OOEA has forged outreach partnerships with trade associations, farm groups, universities, export assistance centers, trade centers, state departments of agriculture, women’s groups, state/federal agencies, the media and youth groups.

Why an FAS Outreach Program? The fact that American agriculture is one of the most export-dependent industries in the U.S.; that 96 percent of the world’s consumers live outside our borders; and that sales of agricultural products overseas are growing at 2-to-3 times the rate at home dramatically highlights the need to make the public more aware of the dynamic export market. Increased exports create jobs. Agricultural exports presently support over 800,000 jobs; generate 25 percent of farm cash receipts, and every \$1 exported creates another \$1.50 in related economic activity. Exports support small businesses (97percent of U.S. exporters are small) that employ 3 of every 4 workers.)

OOEA also houses the Trade Assistance & Promotion Office (TAPO), FAS' "one-stop-shop" for export assistance. You can contact TAPO by telephone at 202-690-7420 or by email at tapo@fas.usda.gov. Please check out the FAS web site at www.fas.usda.gov for more information. TAPO works with exporter service providers like the U.S. Commercial Service to make sure new-to-export and established exporters alike get the information they need to be successful.

Our challenge is to increase public awareness of the importance of trade and expand the network of state, industry, legislative, academic and government outreach partnerships. To do that we must improve communication and "OUTREACH NOTES" is designed to do that. We look forward to hearing from you and exploring ways to partner to increase agricultural exports.

Sincerely,

Dale Miller

Director,
FAS Office of Outreach & Exporter Assistance

Unsubscribe Newsletter

To unsubscribe to “Outreach Notes” or to change your email address contact USDA-FAS, the Office of Outreach and Exporter Assistance by sending a short email to the Editor of “Outreach Notes” at outreach@fas.usda.gov.

Update Email Address

To unsubscribe to “Outreach Notes” or to change your email address contact USDA-FAS, the Office of Outreach and Exporter Assistance by sending a short email to the Editor of “Outreach Notes” at outreach@fas.usda.gov.



Read All About It!

FAS Outreach Office Launches Monthly Email News

This month, the Office of Outreach and Exporter Assistance (OOEA) in USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service began to distribute a one-page electronic news and information report called "*Outreach Notes*" to keep the public informed about U.S. agricultural export opportunities, issues, export assistance and U.S. export programs.

"*Outreach Notes*" is designed as a time saving concept for busy decision makers whose schedules do not permit them to read every article in the newsletters they receive through the mail.

The one-page email report looks and functions much like a web page, permitting readers to skim the headlines and to focus on specific articles that might impact their organization before they read the entire publication. This flexibility gives readers an opportunity to save time by selecting only the stories they wish to read.

By clicking their mouse button on any of the underlined news headlines, feature stories or agricultural links, readers are automatically connected to short features, press releases or other web page addresses that provide additional links of information.

"*Outreach Notes*" is comprised of "Hot News Issues," a monthly export column, state or FAS feature stories and web links to "upcoming events" or organizations such as the regional trade groups and the state departments of agriculture.

In addition, readers can seek answers to their export questions by emailing their inquiries to the FAS Trade Assistance and Promotion Office" or TAPO mailbag. TAPO seeks to identify, encourage and provide direct assistance to new-to-market, established companies and agricultural cooperatives.

TAPO advises trade contacts on the suitability of products for export and markets with the greatest potential, ensuring that exporters and potential exporters are informed about FAS programs and services.

To email your export question, click on the TAPO Mailbag at TAPO@FAS.usda.gov or call the FAS-Outreach TAPO hotline at (202) 720-7420 for additional export information.

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South Dakota Ag Official Serves In Iraq



SFC George Williams, a South Dakota deputy secretary of agriculture, a public affairs officer and a member of COSDA (Communicators of the State Departments of Agriculture) is serving his country in Iraq. Here George takes a moment to enjoy the “We Care” pizza at Tallil Air Base in Iraq. (Photo from COSDA website.)

For more photos on George’s deployment in Iraq, visit the COSDA website. Click on:
<http://www.nasda-hq.org/cosda/GW.htm>

South Dakota Ag Official Serves His Country In Iraq

It was late in the day when the telephone rang on my desk at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. A short period of static and the sound of my voice echoing back through the telephone told me that this was no ordinary call from overseas. I was hoping that the voice on the other end of the satellite phone belonged to George Williams, deputy secretary and public information officer of the South Dakota Department of Agriculture, who is currently serving his country in Iraq.

“Hello,” boomed the pleasant voice of Sergeant First Class George Williams as he greeted me during the wee hours of his morning from somewhere in the rural areas of Iraq. “We have to stand in line to use the satellite phone,” he said. “I could have sent you an email, but I wanted to talk to you personally,” said Sgt. Williams.

Just a week earlier, I had sent an email to Sgt. Williams in Iraq asking him if he wanted to send his friends and state coworkers in COSDA (Communicators of the State Departments of Agriculture) a greeting before the annual October meeting in Nashville, Tennessee. Many of his

fellow “COSDANAUTS,” a nickname used by COSDA to identify their own members, know George well and have tried to keep in touch with him by email.

We exchanged greetings, talked about the weather and a short time later, our conversation was interrupted as the satellite phone became disconnected. But about 15 minutes later, Sgt. Williams called back and I heard for myself the clear connection that the satellite phone provided from halfway around the world. I detected faint music in the background and chuckled to myself as I recognized the theme from *M*A*S*H*, a popular TV series from the 1970s and 1980s about the Korean War.

George Williams was born and raised in Sisseton, South Dakota, but for the past eight months Williams has been deployed in Iraq, serving as Sergeant First Class with the A Battery, 2nd Battalion, 147th Field Artillery.¹ But he hopes to return home to his wife Lisa and his two daughters Alissa and Hannah sometime in February 2005.² His assignments are mostly to help provide security for U.S. convoys and for captured ammunition sites.

Sgt. George Williams has been employed by the South Dakota Department of Agriculture for the past nine years, so I was curious about the types of agricultural crops he’s seen during the past eight months in Iraq.³ George talked to me about his observations.

“A lot of crops here in central and southern Iraq are growing now as precipitation occurs mostly in November and December,” said Sgt. George Williams. “There is a lot of sandy soil and clay soil.”

For example, in Basrah, Sgt. Williams has seen irrigated, sandy soil growing egg plants, tomatoes and onions. A little further north in An Nasiriyah, the clay soil is producing barley and wheat that is used mostly as food or feedstuffs. Moving further north in An Najaf and Al Kut, Williams said the sandy soil there is producing tomatoes and onions. Even though his observations have been about the rural south, he’s aware the very northern region of Iraq produces a wider array of citrus fruit and other tree crops.

“In the areas between the Tigris and the Euphrates Rivers, it’s about as lush as it can get,” said Sgt. Williams. “Grapes, tomatoes and melons are grown in the looser, sandy soil. You also see palm trees in that area.” (These trees produce date palms.)⁴

¹ Information from COSDA website, www.NASDA-hq.org/cosda/

² Information from COSDA website and from exclusive telephone interview with Sgt. Williams.

³ Ibid.

When it comes to livestock, Williams has seen a lot of goats and sheep in the southern areas of Iraq and even in areas further north. He's seen nomads who live in tents and tend to their flocks of sheep.

"Roadside vendors are very popular in Iraq," said Sgt. Williams. "Some days of the week are set aside for livestock sales."

When asked what one memory stands out in his mind about the rural areas of Iraq, Sgt. Williams said there have been many, but he's been struck by the farming techniques he's seen in the past eight months.

"When I saw someone harvesting wheat or alfalfa by hand or saw someone digging a channel for irrigation water, the technology was like stepping back 100 or 200 years," said Williams. "The number of tractors and combines here (in southern Iraq) I could count on both hands... We deal with agricultural surpluses (in the United States), but these people are just trying to get by."

Depending on his mission, Sgt. Williams said he's had a chance to meet some of the local villagers in southern Iraq. Williams said there's still not a lot of communications in the rural areas.

"We've learned to speak with our hands," said Sgt. Williams. "We're helping the Iraqi civilians and soldiers. Most of the Iraqi civilians are very supportive and they appreciate what we're trying to do. Some have been tortured by the former regime."

Sgt. Williams said he witnessed the reactions of the Iraqi people in the rural areas when the United States turned the country back over to the Iraqi people.

"People were glued to their radios for information," said Sgt. Williams. "Once the country was turned over to them, they were jubilant. With tears in their eyes, they celebrated in the streets. It was a very touching moment," he said.

Williams said that the Shia Muslims who were suppressed under the former regime were happy as they realized they could now take advantage of their religious privileges such as making pilgrimages. In some of the very small drive-through communities, Williams has seen both boys and girls now going to school. He said this is a very positive step.

⁴ USDA-FAS

Sgt. Williams said that he'll miss attending this year's COSDA meeting in Tennessee, and he'll especially miss seeing all of his fellow COSDANAUTS in the state departments of agriculture.

"I know Tom Womack will get the job done," said Williams who commented about the COSDA president's efforts to host this year's meeting in Nashville. "I also want to thank those COSDA members who have kept in touch with me," he said. "I've enjoyed corresponding with them even though I haven't been able to respond to everyone."

Reflecting his thoughts back home, Sgt. Williams told me that he'll miss his daughter's seventh birthday party, but he had nothing but praise for the support his family provided to him over the past eight months.

"When you hear people talking that families of soldiers are the real heroes of any war; it's the truth," said Sgt. Williams about his wife Lisa and his two daughters.

When he returns home after his tour of duty in Iraq, I asked Sgt. Williams what he would tell his daughters when they ask him, "What did you do in the war daddy?" Williams chuckled out loud and told me that he's chatted with his daughters already about this very question.

"I told them we're here to help the Iraqi people and to help them take back their country," said Sgt. Williams.

The satellite phone call had come to an end all too soon. I wished George well and told him he would be missed at this year's COSDA meeting, but we were looking forward to seeing him next fall. I also promised him I would pass along his greetings to his COSDA friends. I thanked Sgt. Williams for his unique perspective about Iraqi agriculture.

Marlene Phillips

USDA-Foreign Agricultural Service

Office of Outreach and Exporter Assistance

Anyone wishing to write Sgt. George Williams a note can do so by emailing him at the following address: George.A.Williams@US.ARMY.MIL For his mailing address and more photos of Sgt. Williams in Iraq, click onto the COSDA website at: www.NASDA-hq.org/cosda/



International Marketplace Gets a Taste of Oregon Wine

Oregon wines played on a world stage this past spring as separate tasting events took place in such markets as Sweden, Japan, and China. The efforts-coordinated, in part, by the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) underscore the wine industry's desire to expand exports despite stiff global competition.

"Our wine industry has dabbled in the export marketplace for at least the last ten years, but there seems to have been no concerted effort to sell Oregon wines outside of Canada and the United Kingdom," says Patrick Mayer, international trade manager with ODA. "Within the last year, through our participation with the Oregon Wine Board's Export Committee, we have been able to help give the industry some perspective on our primary markets of Japan and China as well as other markets around the world that might be of interest."

According to the Oregon Agricultural Statistics Service, about 42,000 cases of Oregon wine were exported in 2003-only about 3 percent of all wine sold out of the state last year. Of that amount, more than 16,000 cases went to Canada, the United Kingdom, and France. Nearly 14,000 cases were shipped to Japan in 2003-about a 400 percent increase over 2002. Still, ODA officials believe Japan can improve on those numbers while China and other parts of Europe are pursued. That's why the events are so important.

For 2004, the first planned rollout of Oregon wine took place in Stockholm, where 16 wineries were represented at a tasting held at the U.S. ambassador's residence. Invitations were sent to about 100 importers, food and beverage industry officials, media, and the central purchasing agency for the Swedish government responsible for all alcohol brought into the country. Serendipity may have led to Sweden's interest as food and wine writers and photographers from the Scandinavian country came through Oregon a year ago. The pictures and the words that followed that fateful trip helped grab attention for Oregon wine.

"We were fortunate to have the folks from Sweden come and visit us last year," says Mayer. "Now we want to build on the momentum."

The next international Oregon wine event took place on May 18 a half a world away from Sweden. Tastings took place in Tokyo with 12 participating Oregon wineries. A "taste off" with French wines was part of the strategy for highlighting the quality of Oregon wine. In addition, various Japanese restaurants featured an Oregon wine by-the-glass promotion.

"In Tokyo, wine consumption is now on a par with consumption of sake," says Mayer.

In May 2004, a dozen Oregon wineries-many of them participating in the Japanese events- traveled to Beijing for two separate tastings involving 100 invitees. A separate event followed in the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou.

"The wine market of Mainland China is in its infancy, but wine consumption is increasing at an annual rate of about 25 percent the past couple of years," says Brian Liu, ODA's trade manager for China. "This was the first event Oregon's wine industry has had in China. We invited media, distributors, food and beverage managers from local four-star hotels as well as managers of other high-end restaurants. We want to reach about 1 percent of the market. That's enough to make a difference."

Like so many other Oregon agricultural products, wine is looking for its niche in the export market. In Sweden and other parts of Europe, Oregon wine is competing with centuries-old wineries from France, Italy, and Spain. The Asian market also receives European wine as well as production from Australia. U.S. wine exports are, of course, dominated by California. But Oregon's strong reputation for growing high quality Pinot grapes is well known among wine aficionados. Promotion and education through wine tasting events can help broaden the awareness and expose the consumer to what Oregon has to offer.

"Oregon wines are not going to offer the lowest price, so we have to be targeted with where the product is being promoted," says Mayer. "Sweden and Japan have fairly developed wine markets already. To our advantage, perhaps, Pinot noir and some of the other Oregon-grown varieties are not as well known as Cabernet, Merlot, and other red wines. As the wine consumer gets more sophisticated, they are always hungry for something new and different. That goes for all customers of Oregon wine, home and abroad."

The focus for most Oregon wineries looking at the export market is to reach the high-end retail wine shop or the white tablecloth restaurant of a fancy hotel. The average consumer in a country like Japan can go to a retail store to buy lower cost wine just as American consumers can. Generally, Oregon will not compete with other wine producers who stock the shelves of grocery stores worldwide.

"As an example, Japan has traditionally been a market that demands premium products and is willing to pay for them," says Mayer. "Even though its economy has been weak the past several years, Japan has the second highest GNP in the world after the U.S., and consumer spending is still high on a per capita basis."

The Oregon Wine Board has shown a commitment for more overseas sales by creating an export committee. Members of the committee are excited about the recent events, which were well attended.

"We are the marines hitting the beach for Oregon and trying to position our wines in a world marketplace," says Doyle Hinman, sales manager with Henry Estate, located in Southern Oregon's Umpqua Valley, who is most intrigued with China. "People have told us China has unlimited potential. As a group, we're trying to understand how to do business in that market. These tastings helped us get the lay of the land."

Hopefully, the tasting of Oregon wine will whet an international appetite for more.

For more information, contact Patrick Mayer or Brian Liu at (503) 872-6600.

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The Office of Outreach and Exporter Assistance thanks the Oregon Department of Agriculture for their Oregon wine news feature.

Links to State Regional Trade Groups

The State Regional Trade Groups (STRG) are four regionally located, non-profit trade development organizations that help U.S. food producers and processors sell their products overseas. The STRGs receive funds from USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), the State Departments of Agriculture and private industry.

They carry out promotional activities that increase exports of U.S. high-value food and agricultural products. Activities of the organizations are directed by the State Departments of Agriculture, state agricultural promotion agencies, and coordinated with FAS' Washington and country offices overseas including international trade exhibitions, overseas trade missions, reverse trade missions, export education, in-country research, and point-of-sale promotions in foreign food chains and restaurants in markets around the world. The STRGs also administer a cost-share funding program called the Brand Program that supports promotion of brand name food and agricultural products in overseas markets. The STRGs include:



The Western U.S. Agricultural Trade Association (WUSATA) is located in Vancouver, Washington. <http://www.wusata.org>

Calendar of events: http://www.wusata.org/events_calendar/default.asp



The Mid-America International Agri-Trade Council (MIATCO) is based in Chicago, Illinois. <http://www.miatco.org>

Calendar of events: http://www.miatco.org/us_food/events_calendar/index.htm



The Southern U.S. Trade Association (SUSTA) is located in New Orleans, Louisiana. <http://www.susta.org>.

For the calendar of events click onto: <http://www.susta.org/events/index.html>

(MORE)



The Food Export USA-NE is located in the Northeast at:

<http://www.foodexportusa.org>

Calendar of events: <http://www.foodexportusa.org/calendar/index.cfm>

For more information on the State Regional Trade Groups click:

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/agexport/psinfo.html>



For export assistance click on USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service

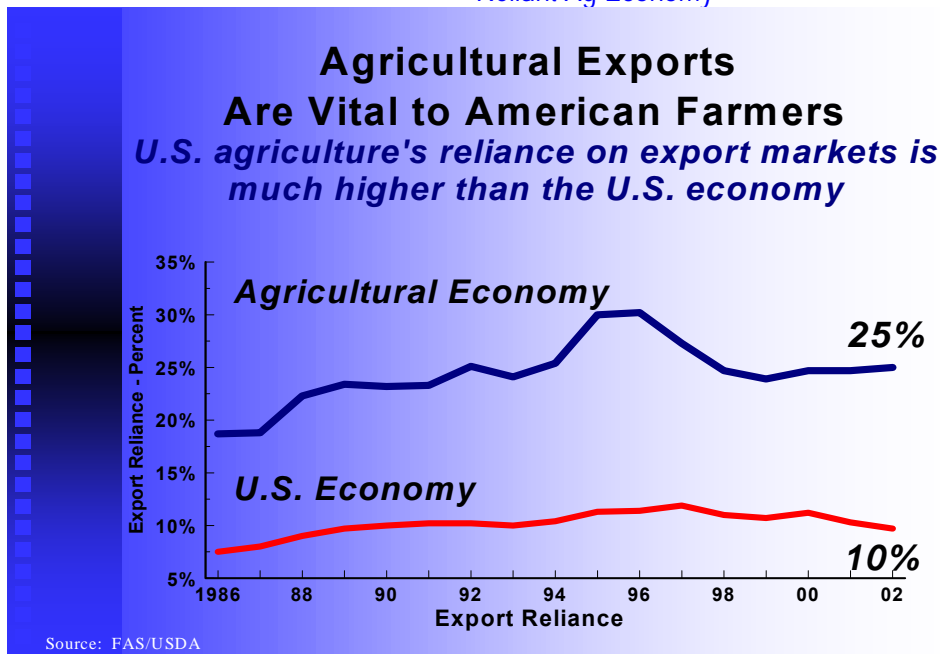
at: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/agexport/exporter.html>



The U.S. Commercial Service Export Assistance link:

<http://www.export.gov>

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Do you know that the Ag economy is twice as reliant on exports as the U.S. economy?

FAS Slide Show on Trade Now Available

In May 2004, USDA released its export forecast for fiscal year 2004 that shows U.S. agricultural exports at a record \$61.5 billion, exceeding the fiscal 1996 record of \$59.8 billion.

This month's Power Point slide from USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) demonstrates the reliance of American agriculture on exports.

With increasing opportunities for sales overseas, it's more important than ever to educate U.S. agricultural trade interests about the export market. These trade interests include exporters, farm groups, trade associations, state departments of agriculture, industry organizations, universities, export assistance centers, federal and state government agencies, agricultural youth groups and the local media. As U.S. companies learn about agricultural exports opportunities, they can expand sales and tap new markets that in the long run benefit the American economy.

Responding to the needs and requests from industry organizations, farm groups and state agencies, the FAS Office of Outreach and Exporter Assistance has produced a free CD Power Point presentation of more than 100 slides and helpful Internet links on the importance of U.S. agricultural trade.

The slides detail the current U.S. agricultural trade situation, the importance of NAFTA and information about programs and services of the Foreign Agricultural Service. FAS already mailed the CD to more than 350 organizations.

For more information on the CD, contact the FAS Office of Outreach and Exporter Assistance at TAPO@fas.usda.gov or call the Trade Assistance and Promotion Office (TAPO) hotline at: (202) 720-7420.

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Americas Food and Beverage Show

7th Americas Food and Beverage Trade Show and Conference will be held December 2-3 2004 in Miami, Florida. More than 500 exporters across the Americas are expected to attend.

For more information, click on the USDA-FAS Trade Show Calendar at:

http://www.fas.usda.gov/agexport/shows/Trade%20Show%20Calendar%202004_05.pdf

or <http://www.fas.usda.gov>

or contact the World Trade Center in Miami, Florida at:

<http://www.americasfoodandbeverage.com/>

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Rudgers Named NASDA President

CONTACT:
Jessica Chittenden
518-457-3136

FOR RELEASE:
Immediately, Tuesday
September 28, 2004

COMMISSIONER RUDGERS NAMED NASDA PRESIDENT
New York Commissioner to Lead National Agriculture Policy Discussions in New Role

State Agriculture Commissioner Nathan L. Rudgers today was named President of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) at the organization's annual meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

"It is an honor to be given the opportunity to lead an organization that continues to be adept at working on the common problems of the farm sector in a collegial spirit," Commissioner Rudgers said. "That collegial approach will serve us well as we press forward into what will be very interesting times for agriculture."

NASDA consists of agriculture commissioners, directors and secretaries from each of the 50 states along with American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Its mission is to support and promote American agriculture while protecting consumers and the environment through the development, implementation and communication of sound public policy and programs.

In accepting the presidency, Commissioner Rudgers noted, "Let's focus as much attention as we can on strengthening and clarifying the Federal-State relationship in administering agricultural, food, and biosecurity programs. I intend to make this the major focus of my personal efforts as your President over the coming year."

As President of the association, Commissioner Rudgers will host NASDA's next annual meeting, slated for September 16-20, 2005 at the Otesaga in Cooperstown, New York.

Commissioner Rudgers has been a member of NASDA since Governor Pataki appointed him Commissioner of Agriculture in 1999. During his tenure, Commissioner Rudgers has also served as President-Elect, Secretary/Treasurer, a Board of Directors Member, and as Chairman of the Food Safety and Nutrition Committee, the Food and Agricultural Security Task Force, and the Farm Labor Task Force.

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PHOTOGRAPH is available upon request by emailing Jessica Chittenden at Jessica.chittenden@agmkt.state.ny.us or by calling 518-457-3136.

New FAS Biotechnology Group Works to Protect U.S. Farm Exports

Resisting plant pests and increasing farm income are two ways that modern biotechnology can help U.S. farmers. But just what is biotechnology?

Biotechnology, including genetic engineering, is used to improve or modify plants, animals, and microorganisms. In this regard, it is not unlike traditional breeding techniques (For more information on biotechnology, click on the FAS fact sheet found at the site <http://www.fas.usda.gov/itp/biotech/Q&As.html>. Or click on the USDA biotechnology website at <http://www.usda.gov/agencies/biotech>).

Cotton, soybeans, and corn are among the U.S. crops that are improved through modern biotechnology. Large volumes of these crops are exported overseas annually.

Since both the technology and foreign markets are important to American agriculture, USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service established a new unit in mid-2003 to focus on these issues. The staff of 12 is comprised of regional and issue experts and is located in the Office of the Administrator.

This *Biotechnology Group* facilitates the export of U.S. farm products that are produced using modern biotechnology and supports policies that encourage the beneficial use of this technology worldwide. Some of the group's activities over the last year include:

- Collecting and analyzing information provided by FAS overseas posts on countries' current and proposed agricultural biotechnology policies;
- Supporting and advocating U.S. interests on agricultural biotechnology in international organizations and agreements;
- Promoting overseas acceptance of U.S. farm products using modern biotechnology; and
- Coordinating with other U.S. Government agencies and agricultural organizations to shape and implement domestic and international biotechnology policies and programs that support farm exports.

For questions about the staff or for more information, contact Andrew Rude at andrew.rude@usda.gov or Paul Spencer at paul.spencer@usda.gov.



NEWS RELEASE

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Washington, DC 20250-1300 • Voice: (202) 720-4623 • Email: oc.news@usda.gov • Web: <http://www.usda.gov>

Release No. 0467.04

Julie Quick (202) 720-4623
Mary Cressel (202) 690-0547

PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN MINNESOTA AND USDA WILL RESTORE WETLANDS

\$4 million will help environmentally sensitive wetlands on more than 7,000 acres

SAINT PAUL, Minn., Oct. 25, 2004—Minnesota's application to become the second state in the nation to participate in the USDA's Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Program (WREP) has been approved officials announced today.

Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty and Agriculture Deputy Undersecretary for Natural Resources and Environment R. Mack Gray made the announcement during an event here to highlight the partnership that will accelerate the state's wetland restoration efforts.

"The pressure on Minnesota's water, wildlife and habitat requires our immediate action to defend this critical resource," said Governor Pawlenty. "The fact that the federal government has approved our plan shows that once again, Minnesota is leading the nation in wetland and habitat restoration."

"This partnership brings federal, state and local resources together to restore wetlands, provide habitat for wildlife and improve water quality," said Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman. "This project supports President Bush's goal to restore, improve and protect an additional 3 million acres of environmentally sensitive wetlands."

Governor Pawlenty and the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), in partnership with USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State Conservationist Bill Hunt, submitted an application to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service earlier this month.

Through Minnesota's WREP plan, the state will provide \$1.2 million and USDA will provide \$2.8 million. The state portion of funding will come from funds previously appropriated by the legislature to BWSR for the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve program, which focuses on habitat restoration and protection, water quality enhancement, and water retention and storage. The application submitted by the state also indicated that Minnesota will develop a long-range wetlands restoration strategic plan in coordination with USDA.

The targeted restoration funds will focus on approximately 7,250 acres throughout Minnesota. Goals and regions include:

- 3,000 acres in the five Presidentially Declared Flood Disaster Counties of Dodge, Faribault, Freeborn, Mower, and Steele counties in southern Minnesota;
- 1,750 acres along the Red River of the North main stem;
- 1,500 acres in the Buffalo-Red River Watershed in northwestern; and,
- 1,000 acres in the Grand Marais Creek Subwatershed in northwestern Minnesota.

In the disaster counties, the program will target sites within the watersheds to achieve strategic flood storage in conjunction with water quality and wildlife benefits. The heavy rains in this area have had a significant impact on agriculture, transportation, and the city of Austin. WREP will help alleviate recurring flooding issues.

“Southeastern Minnesota has been hit hard by recent flood damage,” said Governor Pawlenty. “We have made it a priority to find ways to prevent flooding from occurring in the future and this is just one of many steps we will take to help prevent the problem.”

WREP is administered through a partnership between NRCS and BWSR. The program provides a voluntary opportunity for landowners to receive both financial and technical assistance to restore wetlands and increase wildlife habitat. Wetlands provide fish and wildlife habitat, act as a water quality filter, reduce flooding, recharge groundwater, and provide educational or recreational opportunities. WRP is a voluntary program that offers landowners the options of permanent easements, 30-year easements and restoration cost-share agreements to protect, restore or enhance wetlands on their property.

This announcement demonstrates USDA’s and Governor Pawlenty’s commitment to improve water quality. Other Minnesota efforts include a significant refocusing of clean water initiatives to maximize their value in watersheds with the most need, establishment of the State’s first-ever “Clean Water Cabinet” to make clean water a top priority of state government and the historic Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) bonding proposal for the program’s second phase.

Additional information is available at www.governor.state.mn.us or <http://www.nrcs.usda>.

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NEWS RELEASE

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USDA ANNOUNCES PROTOTYPE TO RESTORE WETLANDS IN UTICA, NEB.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 27, 2004 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced, in cooperation with several state and federal agencies, a project to remove contaminants from groundwater. The project will protect public health while assisting the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission to restore 364 acres of historic wetlands in the North Lake Basin Wildlife Management Area north of Utica, Neb.

“This approach to cleaning Utica’s municipal groundwater contamination will also provide habitat for waterfowl,” said Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman. “Through the beneficial reuse of water, this technique can treat contaminated water, which can then be used for beneficial applications, such as irrigating croplands or creating wetlands.”

Concern about contamination in Utica’s water and some other rural areas has focused on the commonly accepted use of fumigants (generally in the 1940’s and 1950’s) containing carbon tetrachloride to treat stored grain. A small-scale USDA pilot project was launched in 2000 to clean up Utica’s groundwater. Its success led to today’s prototype in the North Lake Basin, located just north of Utica. Less than 5 percent of the 364-acre North Lake Basin near Utica currently contains water available for waterfowl habitat. This project will provide clean water and create additional waterfowl habitat.

This project uses spray irrigation technology and wetland restoration to restore contaminated groundwater through beneficial reuse. The prototype uses specially designed irrigation equipment to “volatilize” or evaporate the carbon tetrachloride contaminants into the air in a manner that will protect public health. The method, which eliminates up to 98 percent of the contaminants, was first demonstrated by the University of Nebraska under initial USDA and Environmental Protection Agency funding. USDA expects to use a similar approach in other rural areas in Nebraska and Kansas, benefiting public health, wildlife and the environment.

Partnering with USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) in this prototype are the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region VII; Natural Resources Conservation Service; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality; Nebraska Game and Parks Commission; Upper Big Blue Natural Resource District; Rainwater Basin Joint Venture; Ducks Unlimited; and the City of Utica. The North Lake Basin prototype was developed by Argonne National Laboratory in collaboration with FSA.

For information on FSA’s conservation and environmental programs, contact your local Farm Service Agency office or visit FSA’s Web site at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

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FAS Experts to Brief Farm Broadcasters on U.S. Trade and Exports

For the first time, the Office of Outreach and Exporter Assistance (OOEA) in USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service will participate in the annual National Association of Farm Broadcasters (NAFB) *"Trade Talk"* trade show during the annual meeting of the National Association of Farm Broadcasters (NAFB) November 17-19 in Kansas City, Missouri.

Part of the OOEA mission is to energize U.S. agricultural interests to export their products overseas; to develop partnerships with trade associations, the state departments of agriculture, farm groups, cooperators, universities and others to build support for market development and food security initiatives; and to educate the public and the media on the importance of trade.

FAS-OOEA will join 97 other commodity groups, agri-business companies, agricultural associations and USDA agencies scheduled to be a part of the very popular *"Trade Talk"* trade show to be held on Thursday, November 18 at the Westin Crown Center. More than 140 farm broadcasters from across the nation will make their rounds during the six-hour trade show interviewing a variety of spokespersons on new policies, procedures, products and other topics. The interviews from *"Trade Talk"* will be aired on more than 2,000 U.S. commercial radio stations.

At booth #24, farm broadcasters will learn about the latest WTO agricultural trade policy from Jim Grueff, assistant deputy administrator of the FAS International Trade Policy staff, while Mike Dwyer, chief economist for FAS, will inform farm broadcasters about the U.S. agricultural trade picture and the importance of U.S. farm exports. Publications and information about FAS will also be available at booth # 24 for those who want to learn more about the mission of USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service.

OOEA believes this unique communications medium can help to expand FAS outreach efforts through interviews that promote the Agency's programs and services inside and outside the farming community. Such proactive media can create positive images of FAS while educating audiences about a variety of agricultural-related issues in the farming, exporting, marketing and agribusiness arenas.

This year, the NAFB will celebrate 60 years of farm broadcasting during its annual convention in Kansas City. NAFB research shows that farmers listen to their local farm broadcasters more than 3 hours a day or 5.9 days a week for the latest news. According to the NAFB, the organization is dedicated to serving U.S. agriculture, while "...acting as a liaison between the producer, consumer and related business interests..."

The NAFB was founded in 1944 as the National Association of Radio Farm Directors, adding television to its name in the early 1950's. Later, members approved the National Association of Farm Broadcasters as the official name of the organization. For more information on FAS, access the website at <http://www.fas.usda.gov> and for more information on the National Association of Farm Broadcasters click on the following link: <http://www.nafb.com>

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Washington Trade Mission A Success

For immediate release: Sept. 27, 2004

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE

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This news release is also available as a [PDF](#).

Gov. Gary Locke Declares China/Vietnam Trade Mission Huge Success; Millions in Projected Sales Reported for Washington Businesses, Farmers

OLYMPIA – Sept. 27, 2004 – Gov. Gary Locke today announced that his international trade mission to China and Vietnam was extremely successful, with businesses on the mission reporting actual sales of \$1.4 million and an estimated \$41.4 million in projected sales during the next 12 months. Locke led a 26-member delegation of business, agriculture and education leaders from around the state on the 10-day mission.

Accompanying the governor on the mission were Juli Wilkerson, director of the state Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED); and Valoria Loveland, director of the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA).

The purpose of the mission was to:

- Promote two-way trade;
- Position Washington state as a world leader in two-way trade of goods and services with China and Vietnam;
- Open more trade doors for Washington companies and farmers in both countries;
- Work with key leaders to improve conditions for business;
- Develop personal relationships between the Washington delegation and Chinese and Vietnamese officials;
- Forge close business ties with Chinese and Vietnamese companies; and
- Further trade, education and cultural relations with both countries.

“Washington state understands the essence of good international trade. We’re a world leader in two-way trade of goods and services,” Locke said. “We’re proud of our long-standing connection to China and now our blossoming patterns of international trade and investment are being shaped by our growing friendship with China. We’re also very enthusiastic in building a strong, lasting trade partnership with Vietnam.”

“Healthy trade requires focus on relationships, not just transactions,” he said. “To build strong trade partnerships, there is no substitute for in-person visits and meetings with our partners, face-to-face. The benefits of our trade partnerships are a direct result of the investments we’ve been willing to make – investments of time and effort and genuine

interest in other countries.”

Two-way trade totaled more than \$97 billion last year overall for Washington – the fourth largest exporting state in the United States. On a per capita basis, Washington has the largest export volume in America and exports goods and/or services to 50 different countries.

This was the first trade mission to Vietnam for the governor. Vietnam shows great promise as a newly emerging market for Washington state products and services. For example:

- In 2003, Washington exported more than any other U.S. state to Vietnam;
- Vietnam now boasts the fastest economic expansion in Asia after China, with average annual growth of 7.4 percent during the past decade;
- In 2003, Vietnam was Washington state’s 13th largest export market, with exports exceeding \$735 million; and
- Important opportunities lie in the other key growth sectors such as power generation; transmission and distribution; industrial and packaging machinery; medical equipment; safety and security equipment; and environmental equipment.

In Ho Chi Minh City, Locke and Loveland promoted Washington apples during a visit to the Metro market and the governor also served french fries made from Washington potatoes at a KFC.

“The event exceeded my wildest expectations,” said Pat Boss, executive director of the Washington State Potato Commission speaking about the KFC promotion. “With over 8 million people in Ho Chi Minh City and 80 million in Vietnam, the event was fantastic.”

Washington is the second largest potato growing state and number one producer of french fries in the United States. In 1995, there were no U.S. french fries entering the Vietnam. But last year, Vietnam imported almost 200 metric tons. The majority of those shipments were made in Washington state processing plants and shipped through Washington state ports.

Vietnam is one of the fastest growing and highest value markets for Washington apples. Washington state grows diverse varieties of high quality apples to accommodate diverse world tastes and Washington’s apples account for more than 90 percent of all U.S. apple exports – more than 50 percent of U.S. apples are produced in the state.

“The trip to Vietnam with Governor Locke has been a rousing success and genuine boon to the growers of Washington apples,” said mission delegate Tracy King, export director for the Washington Apple Commission. “Having Governor Locke constantly touting the superiority of Washington apples on these trade missions gives us an immeasurable leg up on that competition.”

During the trade mission, Locke and Loveland visited the Vine Wine Boutique in Hanoi, which featured wines from Washington state.

“We were literally surrounded by Washington wine – there was almost an entire wall

devoted to it,” Locke said. “We were proud to see our state’s wine so prominently displayed in Vietnam. It’s further proof that our wine is among the best in the world.”

“Vietnam is a very promising trade market for Washington state, and we expect that to translate into even more sales of Washington wine to that country,” he said.

Locke further promoted Washington wines on the trade mission by presenting bottles to Chinese and Vietnamese officials as gifts and talked about the industry and the awards it has won.

“Once again, I’m extremely pleased with the progress we made on this trade mission. We had great turnouts at our Washington apple and potato promotions in Vietnam and Thailand,” said Loveland. “One of the main purposes of our trip was to meet with foreign and U.S. government officials to advocate for trade policies that will benefit our agriculture and food industry. Thanks to Governor Locke, we were able to meet with the highest government officials to discuss trade issues of mutual benefit.”

Wilkerson echoed Locke’s satisfaction of the mission.

“We were very pleased with the results and with how much our companies were able to accomplish during this trade mission,” she said. “We were again reminded of the importance of face-to-face contact when developing international business relationships and our delegates reported that the meetings and the contacts they made exceeded their expectations.”

Washington state and China share a rich history of business, educational and cultural exchange. In 2003, China was Washington’s third largest export market – exporting more than \$2.3 billion in goods and services, more than any other U.S. state except California and Texas.

Locke has made three trips to China, including this one, since he became governor in 1997: one official trade mission in 1997; a special trip with Boeing in December 2002 to help promote Boeing airplanes, celebrate the 30th anniversary of U.S.-China trade relations and promote Washington companies to assist in preparations for the 2008 Olympics in Beijing; and the most recent in October 2003.

Listed below are examples of successes from Locke’s 2004 international trade mission to China and Vietnam:

- VirtualTek signed an agreement with B-MIPS Co., Ltd., to bring new media technologies to phone service providers in China. VirtualTek, founded in 1997, is one of Washington’s successful and rapidly growing high-technology companies. It has sales offices and affiliates throughout North America, Asia, Europe and Central America and provides new media technologies to Fixed/PHS phone service providers and their customers in China.
- A distributorship agreement was signed between United Coatings and Beijing Zhong Taitong Science and Technology Development Company, which includes sharing market intelligence and protocol support. United Coatings, based in Spokane Valley, has been active in international markets and has been exporting to China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan

for about five years. “I am very honored to have been part of this mission, and I wish it wasn’t the last one being led by Governor Locke,” said mission delegate Bill Mann, vice president of international sales for United Coatings. “The coordination and assistance from CTED, along with the genuine support provided by the governor, were outstanding. Both professionally and personally, the mission was all that I had hoped for, and more. It will certainly have a positive impact on our sales efforts in these international markets.”

· MulvannyG2 and the Xian God Temple Development Company, Ltd., entered into an architectural contract for planning and design of a retail development in China. MulvannyG2 is the 10th largest design firm in the United States. It is one of the fastest growing and has worked in all 50 states, three Canadian provinces, and around the world in Mexico, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the United Kingdom, Australia, Malaysia, Taiwan, Guam, South Korea, Japan and China.

Pierce College and Beijing Foreign Studies University signed an agreement to exchange one faculty member each academic year.

For more information about the China and Vietnam trade mission, visit <http://www.governor.wa.gov/trade/index.htm>.

Related links: www.governor.wa.gov; www.cted.wa.gov; www.agr.wa.gov

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World Trade Centers Association:

Find out about upcoming events at World Trade Centers around the globe! The World Trade Center Association has a Calendar of Events that is loaded with seminars, conferences, trade fairs, exhibitions and other events for the international business community. For more information, click on the following link:

<http://world.wtca.org/portal/index.jsp>

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November TAPO Mailbox
NOVEMBER TAPO MAILBOX:

The U.S. Suppliers List is a searchable database of over 3,800 U.S. exporters and their products, used by USDA/FAS to help facilitate connecting potential buyers with U.S. suppliers. It contains over 500 product categories for companies to include in their listing. The database is used by over 80 USDA/FAS Overseas and Washington offices, to help export agents, trading companies, importers and foreign buyers locate U.S. suppliers. It is also used to recruit U.S. exporters to participate in market development activities sponsored by USDA and federal export programs.

How to register on-line: Complete the [on-line questionnaire](#). Please make sure to include the [SIC code](#) and your company's [Dunn & Bradstreet number](#). Your company will be added to the database within three business days.

How to register via fax: Download the registration form in [pdf format](#). Complete the form and mail or fax it to the AgExport Connection Office at the address and numbers listed below.

How to search the U.S. Suppliers List: The U.S. Suppliers List can be searched (online database) at <http://www.fas.usda.gov/scripts/agexport/ussupplierquery.asp>.

NEW!

Trade leads via e-mail: Once your company is added to our database, you will receive regular trade leads (bid requests) directly to your e-mail account.

Customer Service: The AgExport office is staffed Monday-Friday, 9:00am - 5:00 pm (Eastern) to assist you with any of our services or technical questions. Questions left in our 24-hour voice mailbox will be answered the next business day.

AgExport Connections
Ag Box 1052
AGX/FAS/USDA
Washington, DC 20250-1052
Phone: (202) 690-3421

The U.S. Suppliers List (USL) is designed to help small to medium sized U.S. exporters make contact with export agents, trading companies, importers and foreign buyers and create an opportunity to sell their products in overseas markets. The 1999 survey results for the USL program shows that, of the 2800 companies surveyed who use the program, over 2000 companies (70%) had fewer than 100 employees and accounted for 60 percent of the export sales attributed to the program, as shown on the chart. The service offers these smaller exporters, at no cost, the ability to put basic information about their company and products on a USDA-maintained database that is accessed by over 17,000 foreign companies worldwide.

The U.S. Supplier List is a searchable database containing U.S. firms, who are considered as export ready, which is used by USDA/FAS to specifically facilitate connecting potential buyers with U.S. suppliers. It contains over 500 product categories for companies to select from to include in their listing. The database is primarily used by more than 85 USDA/FAS Overseas and Washington offices and is used to respond to inquiries from export agents, trading companies, importers and foreign buyers to locate U.S. suppliers. And, it is used to recruit U.S. exporters to participate in market development activities sponsored by USDA and federal export programs.

For more information, there is a “one-stop” information source for U.S. exporters and international buyers to research, plan, and evaluate potential trade opportunities. Double-click on: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/buying.html>.

For additional contact information, contact the Trade Promotion Assistance Office (TAPO) at tapo@fas.usda.gov or call the TAPO hotline at (202) 720-7420.

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